

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COOPERATIVE COUNCIL OF
AUSTRALIA (INC) HELD AT PANTHERS CONVENTION CENTRE, PENRITH,
ON WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER, 1997 AT 11.00 A.M.**

PRESENT

Jim Howard	(Chairman)
Tony Gill	Vic
John Booth	WA
Ron Butler	NSW

APOLOGIES

David Osgood; Frank O'Connor, Don Kinnersley, Lui Raiteri.

Note: Meeting commenced 12.45p.m. (due to plane cancellation)

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 15 JULY 1997

Amendment Page 3 delete National before Cooperative Council, and National President should read National Chairman.

Amendment to LEGISLATION reading

"Discussion centred on legislation. There was consensus on some issues and each state was to consider individually their position and meet again to devise a Cooperative Council position."

LEGISLATION (Having arisen above in the minutes.)

From discussion, it would appear that almost all states Registries may have settled their main concerns over the national situation.

From Barbara Bradshaw a point of view was that there was no actual agreement in place, she had not seen any minutes, and believes there was some reconsideration of agreements that had been entered into in Adelaide.

It is difficult to receive information from the Registrars but it would appear there is progress. Mr. Butler informed the meeting he thought Gary Cronan was going to discuss the detail at the Conference but, the paper had not been written as at last night.

It was suggested that instead of having Core Consistent Provisions there would be Core Consistent Divisions. This raised concern on the ability to address key individual sections. Mr. Booth informed that W.A. would follow other states after amendments.

RADE & COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

*Do not believe we should
(SEE SUBSEQUENT MINUTES)*

Mr. Booth was of the opinion that Jenni Mattila was not the ideal person to be attending meetings as representing cooperatives, and that a more suitable representative would be a representative from the Cooperative Council of Australia to sit in whenever discussing cooperative policy. It was unlikely that that would happen. It was uncertain if Jenni Mattila was representing Cooperatives or the fact that she was the consultant/advisor retained by Victoria to draft legislation.

It was suggested that each state goes back to their own Registrar and find out what their problems are.

Mr. Howard made comment that he had been put on the spot not only by cooperatives but by the Queensland Attorney General at Parliament House, saying write to him as National Chairman and tell him what you want and we will do it. Embarrassing part is that beyond the original draft agreed (with reservations) no-one has provided a new consistent draft to comment on and some are saying why isn't it happening.

Mr. Howard said the way he sees his position as Chairman is to tackle Qld Registrar, Gary Cronan, and Barbara Bradshaw and Jenni Mattila. There seems to be conflict of opinions of what stage their work is at.

What needs to be clarified is what the position is in terms of outcomes and what has been agreed to in principle by the Registrars even if there is no agreement on the minutes.

Mr. Howard said he was of the opinion that he should as Chairman of the Cooperative Council, write to each state Attorney-General and say we are not being kept informed of things that are of major importance and industry needs to be kept informed (promptly).

It is significant that we write as the Cooperative Council rather than each individual state contacting their Registrar. If contact is not made as a Cooperative Council it appears that each of the state registry persons are dealing with each of us individually. Divided we will fail because they are deferring releasing material until approved fait accompli, by all states.

It was suggested a letter saying we would like to have a new registrars group convenor is desirable, (who do we contact now Barbara Bradshaw has departed). The Council needs to be kept informed as four months have been wasted. We have heard nothing and another meeting is scheduled for the new year - possibly February.

Mr. Gill suggested each should contact their registry for feedback as some had not sought specific comment from their registry. The Council Members need to be more pro-active and assertive.

It was also discussed that each State representative report back to Mr. Howard as soon as possible with the results of the reports they obtain and make a further decision at that point of time (over the telephone). Mr. Howard agreed.

Mr. Booth had been informed by Gary Cronan that the amendments will be taking place in 1998 and the Legislative Advisory Council agreed on amendments. That brings another issue potentially, of not knowing what the amendments are before they are proposed for public discussion.

Mr. Booth stated it is important that we get it right because it is hard to change cooperative law after the event.

At the signing of the Attorneys General, all signing states would be deemed to be complying from then on but there is a twelve months time frame to bring the respective legislation into line.

Considerable exchange of views at a practical level ensued. A consensus was agreed on certain issues. Other matters were up for further discussion when the registry position was known.

Mr. Howard suggested that at today's meeting there was no need to revisit legislation on a section by section basis.

Mr. Butler moved
Mr. Gill seconded

"That Mr. Howard as Chairman of the Cooperative Council makes contact with the convenor of the Adelaide meeting, each state in its own right goes back to its own Registry in an endeavour to find out their summary of the Adelaide meeting, then contact be made with Mr. Howard with the information in that regard. If states individually cannot get the information then the Cooperative Council under its auspices (Mr. Howard) writes to all of the States."

CARRIED

Mr. Booth also felt we should not be discussing legislation at length today.

General discussion ensued on the interpretation of the legislation and its possible administrative application by the different Registries.

Tony Gill moved
John Booth seconded

"That the minutes of the previous meeting 15/7/97 as amended be received."

CARRIED

A handwritten signature, possibly 'JH', is written in ink.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Legislation as discussed above completed.

IMAGE AND INFORMATION

Mr. Howard envisaged to boost the status of the cooperatives' image nationally in fact there is a role for a national body in this area in particular.

Endorsement of the discussion groups concept and promotion of Image and Information there from.

Members read a reply from Vern Hughes on Image.

He is most enthusiastic to participate in an image discussion group. The Council was advised he is no longer on the Victorian Federation.

A discussion ensued, Tony Gill suggested David Griffiths, the new Chairman of Victorian Federation, to be convenor of the Image Interest Group. (John Gill resigned following recent ill health.)

Tony Gill would like to include Tax and the Constitutional Convention on the Agenda.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Circulated Bank Statements - no transactions

Mr. Howard moved that the financial report be accepted.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

VERN HUGHES

(as above)

DAVID OSGOOD

Mr. Howard circulated David Osgood's apology for the meeting - observations noted.

ASX

Papers achieved progress with new policy released considerably improved.



BARBARA BRADSHAW

Letters circulated

Mr. Howard moved that the Correspondence be agreed to.

CARRIED

TAXATION

Tax Summit - The Council would like a seat at the table. General discussion on cooperatives image and governments perception of cooperatives. Tax is very important to all Cooperative Organisations.

Mr. Howard made approaches to the Tax Office in Canberra, as a result of the papers on Demutualisation.

We do not want Cooperatives caught up in a way that actually changes what is a cooperative by definition in terms of the entitlements that they have currently got.

Secondly, Mr. Howard tackled Capital Gains Tax which currently applies on mergers of cooperatives. Neither has drawn any response.

Submissions invited and positions should be developed in conjunction with Taxation Interest Group.


NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Discussion centred on

- (a) Suggested Themes
- (b) Suggested Speakers - to look at regional people
- (c) Target Audience

Mr. Howard expressed his appreciation for Ron Boswell's support in booking the Mural Gallery, Parliament House.

Sponsorship was discussed. A figure of \$125,000 was needed if an industry exhibition was included. However, Parliament House was suggested by Ron Boswell as the appropriate venue for information and promotional displays. The level of sponsorship was discussed \$2,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000. Major Sponsors provide a speaker that can speak with authority. The categories to be broken into \$10,000 and above as a major sponsor of the conference, \$5,000 - \$10,000 sponsor of a session. Mr. Howard wished to review the recent budget by the Conference Organisers. N.S.W. had received several seven thousand dollar sponsorships for its recent conference.



Mr. Howard asked for mailing lists and asked that they could be provided as soon as possible also to start advertising in all Newsletters.

Accommodation alternatives were also discussed.

There is a need to keep the brochure simple as cooperatives will be more interested in looking for the content.

GENERAL BUSINESS

CONVENOR OF INTEREST GROUPS

Invite the person as an individual to be convenor of an interest group.

Ask to get consent of employer, if any, and to suggest that expenses associated with the interest groups be met by the employer.

All convenors should work through Jim Howard, as Chairman of the Cooperative Council of Australia.

The Interest Groups are convened under the auspices of the Cooperative Council of Australia.

Cooperative Council of Australia will recognise the input and assistance of convenors at the National Conference.

Agreed by all to proceed.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION &

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

Deferred at this point.

CONCLUSION

There being no further business, Mr. Howard declared the meeting closed at 5.15p.m.


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JAMES HOWARD
Chairman